

U.S. Proposes Action Plan to Combat Racial and Religious Discrimination and Intolerance

The United States participated actively in the recent October 19 – 30, 2009 meeting of the Human Rights Council's Ad Hoc Committee on the Elaboration of Complementary Standards, and is profoundly aware of the destructive consequences of racial and religious intolerance.

The United States believes that existing international treaties, such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination, clearly obligate states parties to take effective measures to combat racial and religious intolerance. Amendments to the international human rights legal framework – in the form of new treaties, protocols to existing treaties, or reinterpretations of obligations under those treaties – are not necessary and only divert attention from the real problem.

Simply put, there are evident gaps in effective implementation by governments of their existing obligations under international human rights law. To this end, the United States has presented to the Ad Hoc Committee the following "Action Plan to Combat Racial and Religious Discrimination and Intolerance" that begins to lay out a roadmap for practical action, transparent reporting and greater civil society input the international community should pursue to strengthen compliance with their existing obligations under international law in these areas. It is our firm belief that concrete actions to better address racial and religious discrimination and intolerance will do more to combat these scourges than years spent negotiating unnecessary legal instruments.

U.S. Government Action Plan

U.S. Contribution to the Ad Hoc Committee on the Elaboration of Complementary Standards